



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**For Immediate Release**

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**MAN SENTENCED FOR TWO OF THE LARGEST METHAMPHETAMINE  
SEIZURES IN THE TAMPA BAY AREA**

U. S. Attorney Paul I. Perez announced today that late Friday, April 7, 2005, FRANCO HERRERA-AGUILAR was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Richard A. Lazzara to 292 months' imprisonment for conspiring to possess with intent to distribute and distribution of methamphetamine. The defendant pled guilty on January 6, 2005.

During the testimony at the sentencing hearing, Herrera-Aguilar was identified as the source of supply for two of the biggest methamphetamine seizures in Polk County, approximately 44 pounds in June 2001 and approximately 30 pounds in August 2001. Testimony further revealed how law enforcement made numerous other seizures of the defendant's narcotics to include approximately 13 pounds of methamphetamine in Oklahoma; 24 pounds of methamphetamine in Louisiana; 5 pounds of methamphetamine in Tallahassee; and 2 kilograms of cocaine in Mississippi. According to court records, a total of approximately 80 pounds of methamphetamine was seized in the case, and a total of approximately \$650,000 in U.S. Currency was seized and forfeited, more than \$300,000

of which was located in the defendant's possession upon his arrest. Further, the defendant was identified as the methamphetamine source of supply of Ramon Luna-Magana, a Haines City car dealership owner who was sentenced in September 2003 to 262 months' imprisonment for a related methamphetamine conspiracy charge. Law enforcement seized and forfeited all of the vehicles located at Luna Auto Sales.

U. S. Attorney Perez stated, "This prosecution successfully dismantled a significant methamphetamine organization and rid our communities of one of the largest methamphetamine distributors in our area. The case is a fine example of the collaborative effort between federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies working together to destroy drug organizations in our area by putting the culprits in prison and bringing down the economic infrastructure which supports the illegal activity."

This case was prosecuted by assistant United States Attorneys Anthony Porcelli of the General Crimes Section and Adelaide Few of the Asset Forfeiture section of the Tampa Division of the United States Attorney's Office, and investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration, with the assistance of the Lakeland Police Department; the Polk County Sheriff's Office; the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the Florida Department of Law Enforcement; the Dorville (Georgia) Police Department; the Oklahoma Highway Patrol; the Louisiana State Police; and the Mississippi State Police.